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Unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries

Report of the Secretary-General

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Annex

Replies received from Member States and the European Union

Islamic Republic of Iran

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[5 October 2017]

The Islamic Republic of Iran reiterates its serious concern over the imposition of unilateral economic sanctions against developing countries as an instrument of foreign policy and rejects it as a violation of international law, international humanitarian law and human rights, in particular the right to development. Such unilateral sanctions should be lifted immediately.

We also express our concern that the imposition of unilateral sanctions on third parties is not in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, in particular non-interference in internal affairs, sovereign equality, freedom of trade and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

The unilateral and extraterritorial application of domestic legislation against other countries clearly and gravely contravenes the rule of law at the international level. There is no legal ground for a State to make decisions for other States in contradiction with its obligations under international law and against the wishes of other independent States and sovereign countries. Such unilateral extraterritorial actions are an obvious manifestation of the rule of power through the misuse of the instrument of law. They could also qualify as internationally wrongful acts in many cases, which would entail the international responsibility of the State concerned, including full reparations for any damages incurred upon targeted States.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has been a target of such measures for several decades. The imposition of these unilateral sanctions dates back to 1980, when the United States, for the first time, adopted them against Iran. During this period, a few others have also sanctioned similar measures. The indiscriminate nature of the measures amount to collective punishment of civilians. They have had a significant impact on the realization of their economic and cultural rights, in particular their right to development, right to health and right to education. Sanctions have also prevented international financial organizations and development institutions from granting loans and approving cooperation projects in Iran. As an example, the blocking of Iran's projects in the Global Environment Facility (GEF) by the United States can be mentioned. In short, the unilateral coercive measures against Iran have caused billions of dollars of damages due to the direct economic losses or missed economic opportunities.